

Special Education Advisory Panel

Minutes

August 17, 2007

Members Present

Steve Viola	Ginger Luetkemeyer	Brenda Boyd
Lynda Roberts	Shirley Woods	Jeaneal Alexander
Diane Francis	Heidi Atkins Lieberman	Bev Woodhurst
Stefanie Wickers	Sue Alderton	Dorothy Parks
Martha Crabtree	Eileen Huth	Cathy Einhorn
Jerry Neal	Ray Wicks	Trish Grassa

Members Not Present

Kristen Callen	Melissa Frazier	Patti Simcosky
Amanda Coleman	Tammy Hicks	Ken Southwick
Karen Coleman	Pat Jackson	Sherri Tucker
DeAnn Fiedler	Kim Oligschlaeger	Theresa Valdes
Doreen Frappier	Mary Kay Savage	

Copies of handouts distributed at the meeting are available at:
<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142meetings.html>.

Call to Order/Introductions/Approval of Minutes – Bev Woodhurst called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Lynda Roberts made a motion to approve the minutes from June as written. Stefanie Wickers seconded the motion. Motion passed with one abstention.

Network of Care Webpage – Nancy Nickolaus from the Department of Mental Health (DMH), Division of MR/DD presented information regarding the Network of Care and its webpage http://missouri.networkofcare.org/home_state.cfm?stateid=30 along with disseminating a resource packet to panel members. The Network of Care is an online information place for individuals, families, and agencies concerned with mental and emotional wellness, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities. The webpage provides critical information, communication, and advocacy tools with a single point of entry. The webpage assists users in finding needed information, support, advocacy, and the right services at the right time for a person with disabilities.

A panel member asked how this type of wrap-around care could also be provided for students in school and not just for adults. One problem is many children do not meet DMH's eligibility criteria for mental health services. Heidi suggested asking John Heskett who is working for DMH to come to the next panel meeting and present information on what mental health services are available to students and how those services can be included in the child's educational program.

OSEP's Determination Letter to Missouri – At the last meeting, Heidi Atkins Lieberman discussed the determination letter that Missouri received from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). She wanted to further clarify what the determination meant as there had been much confusion by the press and school districts. The "Needs Assistance" label that Missouri received was the same as what many other states received. The U. S. Department of Education explained that they had approached this in a very lenient manner this year since it was a new process. The indicators they focused on were strict compliance requirements only. None focused on student performance. Also, the data was based on 2004-05 data. This was the first year noncompliance was to be corrected within 12 months.

School District Determinations – Heidi indicated the state must now use the same four categories to label the responsible public agencies. Division staff have been discussing whether additional categories should be included; if so, which ones; and, what criteria should be used. Heidi asked for feedback from the SEAP

on the proposal and discussion took place. The SEAP indicated they supported the additional categories being used in the process.

DESE Update

- **Update from the Data Management Meeting in DC** – Heidi made reference to a recent SELS message which indicated that changes to the SPP and APR were out for public comment. Division staff are reviewing the changes and will be submitting comments as needed. The proposed changes can be viewed at <http://edicsweb.ed.gov/browse/unapproved.cfm>. Click on the collection numbered 03406 and then click on the link to download attachments.
- **SPDG Update** – Heidi indicated that Missouri was awarded the SPDG grant at \$1.3 million per year. The grant focuses on the development and implementation of an integrated model by looking at what three-tiered models of intervention are currently available and integrating them. The Division is planning to start with two school districts per RPDC region during the first year. Staff hope to have the model developed and plans for the training completed by the end of the school year.
- **Child Complaints/Due Process** – Heidi gave a preliminary update on the number of due process hearings, dismissals, etc. for FY 07. The official due process disclosure will be at the December panel meeting. She also indicated there have been 99 child complaints filed with 16 percent being withdrawn during that same fiscal year. Mediation is now a part of the child complaint process.
- **Focused Monitoring** – Heidi indicated ten districts had a focused monitoring last school year. There are six districts scheduled for this school year. The focused monitoring visits have been aligned with the scheduled MSIP visits.
- **Virtual Schools** – Heidi indicated that the virtual school started on August 15 with all state funded seats allocated. 109 of Missouri's 114 counties have students participating with a third of the students being full time. The incident rate of students with disabilities is higher than the state average. It was suggested that a presentation be given on some examples of how the virtual school is being utilized in school districts.
- **End of Course Exams** – Heidi reported that DESE is close to awarding the contracts and expect to implement for algebra I, biology, and English II by 2008-09 school year. These tests will replace the current Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests used in grades 10 and 11.
- **MO Options Program** – Heidi indicated she recently checked with Shawn Brice on the status of this option for DOC. Shawn has not heard back from DOC yet. Linda Roberts indicated there are some logistic issues being discussed.
- **OSEP Leadership Conference** – Heidi and Pat Jackson attended the OSEP Leadership Conference in Washington, DC. The small concurrent sessions were very good.

Number of Panel Meetings Per Year – Panel members discussed the possibility of going to quarterly meetings instead of six meetings per year. Suggestions from panel members included avoiding meetings during weeks with a state holiday and scheduling meetings on a different day of the week. It was decided that the October meeting would be cancelled and the new member orientation would be scheduled with the December panel meeting. A vote was taken and the majority of the panel members agreed. A panel meeting has also been scheduled for Thursday, March 13.

Working Lunch - The subcommittees met for approximately one hour.

Subcommittee Reports

- **Evaluation** – Lynda Roberts indicated the reporting date for the annual report has been changed to June 1-May 31 to allow time for the report to be completed by the July 1 deadline. Linda also indicated some changes were considered to the bylaws to include alumni members but, in looking at what other states do, there was no justification to do this in addition to the fact that it would require a change to the State Plan.
- **Rules and Regulations** – Ray Wicks indicated a new state law will go into effect on September 1, 2007, on bullying and wondered whether it would have any impact on special education. The new law addresses all

forms of bullying and defines what bullying is. Ray also suggested that panel members review OSEP's suggested changes to the SPP and provide comments during the comment period if needed.

- **Monitoring** – Brenda Boyd indicated they would like to see data on what categories there are for child complaints. They would also like to get a copy of the parent survey used during the MSIP process and the due process and/or child complaint survey.
- **Programs** – Martha Crabtree indicated she would like to be updated on the schools needing the most improvement and what programs have been made available to them and how are they being received? She also felt there needed to be some future discussion regarding teacher shortages. She also requested information on the number of special education and regular education students suspended or expelled under the Safe Schools Act.
- **Nominations** – Trish Grassa indicated there are two vacancies and both are in the process of being filled.
- **Public Comment** – Jeaneal Alexander indicated they are trying to secure an email address for the public comments to be submitted to.

Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) – Cathy indicated the LDA asked her to share with the panel a flip chart that was developed as a guide for teachers to use in the classroom with students with specific learning disabilities. The cost of the flip chart is \$10. To order or for more information, go to the LDA website.

Adjournment – Shirley Woods made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Eileen Huth seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.